

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-14 IO-14 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAJ-01 NIC-01 DRC-01 /131 W

----- 079018

P R 081741Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2390

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

CINCEUR VAIHINGEN

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG

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NOFORN

MILITARY ADDRESSEES FOR POLADS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GW, UR

SUBJECT: SOVIET DIPLOMAT'S COMMENTS ON BRANDT
RESIGNATION

REF: MOSCOW 6806 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: SOVIET POLITICAL COUNSELOR TOLD EMBOFF MAY 8 THAT BRANDT'S RESIGNATION HAD COME AS A SHOCK AND DISAPPOINTMENT TO SOVIET EMBASSY IN BONN. SCHMIDT AND GENSCHER, BUT PARTICULARLY THE FORMER, ARE UNKNOWN QUANTITIES AS FAR AS SOVIETS ARE CONCERNED. THE LOCAL EMBASSY IS UNCERTAIN AS TO WHERE THE NEW GOVERNMENT WILL HEAD WITH ITS OSTPOLITIK. THE SOVIET REP EXPRESSED UNHAPPINESS OVER THE GDR HANDLING OF GUILLAUME, FEELING THAT EAST BERLIN SHOULD HAVE LEFT HIM INACTIVE IN THAT SENSITIVE POSITION AS BRANDT'S ADVISER. THE SOVIET REP SAID HE EXPECTS MOSCOW TO TAKE SOME MONTHS TO REVIEW SCHMIDT'S POLICIES TOWARD THE EAST BEFORE DECIDING HOW TO MOVE WITH THE NEW GOVERNMENT. THE SOVIET REP SAID HE THOUGHT THAT BERLIN PROBLEMS WOULD ALSO BE PUT ON ICE FOR A WHILE. IN SUM, THE SOVIET EMBASSY HERE IS UNHAPPY AND KNOWS THAT ITS FORMERLY CLOSE CONTACTS WITH THE CHANCELLERY ARE GOING TO HAVE TO BE REBUILT FROM THE GROUND UP. THIS IS REPORTEDLY CAUSING AMBASSADOR FALIN TO CONSIDER ASKING TO BE REASSIGNED TO MOSCOW, FOR HE FEELS HIS USEFULNESS HERE HAS ENDED WITH BRANDT'S DEPARTURE. END SUMMARY.

1. AT LUNCH WITH EMBOFF MAY 8, SOVIET POLITICAL COUNSELOR SPOKE GLOOMILY ABOUT BRANDT'S RESIGNATION AS CHANCELLOR. HE SAID THE DEVELOPMENT HAD COME AS A SHOCK AND DISAPPOINTMENT, SINCE THE SOVIETS HAD PLACED GREAT CONFIDENCE IN BRANDT'S WILLINGNESS TO PURSUE A REASONABLE POLICY TOWARD THE EAST. HE SAID THE NEW SCHMIDT-GENSCHER TEAM WAS AN UNKNOWN QUANTITY TO THE SOVIETS WHO WERE NOT CONFIDENTIAL

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SURE WHERE EITHER STOOD ON RELATIONS WITH THE USSR.

2. SOVIET REP SAID MOSCOW ASSUMED THAT SCHMIDT WOULD GENERALLY FOLLOW A LINE SIMILAR TO BRANDT'S TOWARD THE USSR BUT OUR SOURCE SAID THE SOVIETS DID NOT EXCLUDE A CERTAIN MOVEMENT TO THE RIGHT IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. HE COMMENTED THAT, IF THIS WERE THE CASE, AND IF SCHMIDT AND GENSCHER ATTEMPTED TO EMPLOY THE OLD COMMUNIST-DEVIL

IMAGE TO WIN SOME POPULARITY IN GERMANY, THEN THE RESULTS
COULD BE MOST DANGEROUS. IN SUCH A CASE, HE WOULD
FORESEE A RETURN TO THE OLD HARDLINE ANTI-FRG POSITION
IN MOSCOW. HE SAID, SPEAKING "PERSONALLY",
THAT THIS WOULD NOT BE IN THE INTERESTS OF THE USSR, THE
FRG OR THE U.S., FOR IT COULD HAVE A SPILLOVER EFFECT
ON EAST-WEST RELATIONS GENERALLY.

3. EMBOFF POINTED OUT THAT THE SOVIETS HAD THEMSELVES
TO BLAME FOR SOME OF BRANDT'S RECENT DIFFICULTIES WITH
OSTPOLITIK, ESPECIALLY IN THE BERLIN CONTEXT. SOVIET
REP CONCEDED THAT THIS WAS THE CASE, AND THEN COMMENTED
RUEFULLY THAT THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN BONN HAD BEEN TRYING
TO GET MOSCOW TO TAKE A MORE REASONABLE POSITION ON
VARIOUS BERLIN ISSUES PREPARATORY TO BRANDT'S VISIT TO
MOSCOW, ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR JULY. HE SAID THAT,

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RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 NIC-01 DRC-01 /131 W

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P R 081741Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2391

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART
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PARADOXICALLY, MOSCOW HAD COME AROUND TO THE LOCAL EMBASSY VIEW JUST ABOUT THE TIME THAT BRANDT DECIDED TO RESIGN. THE SOVIET SAID THAT HE EXPECTED THE EASED SOVIET POSITION ON THESE BERLIN ISSUES TO BE CARRIED THROUGH, DESPITE BRANDT'S EXIT FROM THE CHANCELLERY. EMBOFF SAID HE HOPED THIS WOULD BE THE CASE FOR NEITHER THE U.S., THE USSR NOR THE FRG NEEDED TROUBLE OVER BERLIN AT THIS POINT.

4. SOVIET REP SAID HE EXPECTED LITTLE TO HAPPEN IN THE FRG-SOVIET RELATIONSHIP FOR WEEKS AND POSSIBLY MONTHS. MOSCOW WOULD WAIT TO SEE WHAT SORT OF POLICY SCHMIDT WISHED TO PURSUE AND WOULD THEN PLAY ITS CARDS ACCORDINGLY. HE SAID THE BASIC PROBLEM AS FAR AS THE LOCAL EMBASSY WAS CONCERNED WAS THAT IT NOW HAD NO CONTACTS IN THE CHANCELLERY, WITH WHICH IT HAD LATELY BEEN CONDUCTING MUCH OF ITS FOREIGN POLICY. HE SAID AMBASSADOR FALIN WAS QUITE DEJECTED OVER THIS DEVELOPMENT, FEELING THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO START ALL OVER AGAIN TO ESTABLISH THE CONTACTS NECESSARY FOR HIS PURPOSES. OUR SOURCE SAID THAT FALIN WAS CONSIDERING ASKING MOSCOW TO BE REASSIGNED THERE, FEELING THAT HIS USEFULNESS IN BONN WAS AT AN END.

5. ASKED WHAT THE SOVIETS WOULD DO IF FACED WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FEDERAL ENVIRONMENT AGENCY (FEA) IN WEST BERLIN NEXT MONTH, SOVIET REP SAID THAT

"HIGH AUTHORITIES" IN MOSCOW CONTINUED TO HOPE THAT THE FEA ISSUE WOULD GO AWAY. THEY EXPECTED THAT THE FRG - PARLIAMENTARY PROCESS WOULD BE STRUNG OUT LONG ENOUGH THAT NOTHING WOULD HAPPEN IN THIS AREA BEFORE THE FALL. AT THAT TIME, THE SOVIETS WOULD TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT THE MATTER. EMBOFF SAID THIS SEEMED A SOMEWHAT OPTIMISTIC APPROACH. SOVIET AGREED BUT COMMENTED THAT THERE WAS A "MYSTICAL" BELIEF IN MOSCOW THAT THE FEA PROBLEM WOULD SIMPLY DISAPPEAR WITH THE PASSAGE OF TIME. EMBOFF EXPRESSED SKEPTICISM AND ADDED THAT, IF THE FEA WAS SET UP IN WEST BERLIN THIS SUMMER, THE SOVIETS WOULD SEEM TO

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BE WELL-ADVISED NOT TO CREATE DIFFICULTIES WITH THE NEW GOVERNMENT OVER THE MATTER. EMBOFF SAID HE THOUGHT THIS WOULD START OFF SCHMIDT'S RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS ON EXACTLY THE WRONG NOTE. SOVIET REP SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THIS POINT.

6. EMBOFF ASKED SOVIET REP TO EXPLAIN EXACTLY HOW THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COULD BE EXPECTED TO EXPLAIN TO THE GERMAN PUBLIC THAT EAST-WEST DETENTE MADE SENSE WHEN THE GDR PLANTED A SPY IN THE CHANCELLOR'S ENTOURAGE. SOVIET SAID POLITICAL ESPIONAGE WAS A FACT OF LIFE FOR ALL OF US, BUT WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE GDR HAD HANDLED MATTERS VERY BADLY. GUILLAUME HAD BEEN USEFUL, BUT ONLY marginally so. HE COULD HAVE SENT LONG WRITTEN REPORTS ONCE EVERY SIX MONTHS AND HAD JUST AS MUCH EFFECT. FOR MANY OF THE THINGS ON WHICH GUILLAUME COULD REPORT WERE NOT USABLE IN CONDUCTING FOREIGN POLICY, EITHER FOR THE GDR OR THE USSR. EMBOFF SAID THE SPY'S FOREKNOWLEDGE OF FRG NEGOTIATING POSITIONS MUST HAVE HELPED THE EAST. SOVIET REPLIED THAT GUILLAUME HAD NOT BEEN NECESSARY FOR THAT PURPOSE: THERE WERE VERY FEW SECRETS IN BONN AND EVENTUALLY EVERYTHING OF REAL INTEREST CAME OUT IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER.

7. SOVIET SAID THAT HE HOPED THE GUILLAUME AFFAIR WOULD

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P R 081741Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2392

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

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AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

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NOT END UP SPOILING THE FRG RELATIONSHIP WITH MOSCOW.

EMBOFF COMMENTED THAT THERE WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE SOME FALLOUT, AND CERTAINLY IN THE FRG-GDR RELATIONSHIP. SOVIET REPLIED SHARPLY THAT THIS WAS OF NO CONCERN TO MOSCOW: THE FRG-GDR TIES WERE OF NO MOMENT WHEN IT CAME TO THE LARGER QUESTION OF MOSCOW'S RELATIONS WITH BONN. THE EAST GERMANS COULD WORRY ABOUT THEIR OWN PROBLEM.

8. EMBOFF ASKED WHETHER BRANDT'S DEPARTURE WOULD CAUSE PROBLEMS WITHIN THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP OVER THE ISSUE OF DETENTE. SOVIET SAID EMPHATICALLY THAT IT WOULD NOT, UNLESS SCHMIDT PURSUED POLICIES CLEARLY AIMED AGAINST SOVIET INTERESTS. SOVIET REP SAID HE THOUGHT THERE WAS A TENDENCY IN THE WEST TO OVERESTIMATE THE STRENGTH OF THOSE OPPOSED TO DETENTE IN MOSCOW: IT WAS A VERY SMALL NUMBER AND REPRESENTED NO THREAT TO BREZHNEV'S FIRM AND CLEAR LINE IN FAVOR OF DETENTE. SOVIET REP ADDED THAT HE THOUGHT THE GDR LEADERSHIP PROBABLY HAD MIXED FEELINGS ABOUT BRANDT'S RESIGNATION: THERE WOULD BE SOME HAPPINESS THAT A MOST POPULAR (IN THE GDR) WEST GERMAN POLITICAL FIGURE WAS GONE FROM THE SCENE, BUT THERE WOULD BE CONCERN THAT THE GDR WOULD COME UNDER INTERNATIONAL CENSURE FOR HAVING BROUGHT ABOUT BRANDT'S DOWNFALL.

9. COMMENT: THE SOVIET DIPLOMAT, WHOM EMBOFF HAS NOW KNOWN FOR SOME YEARS, IS SELF-ASSURED AND A SOBER SORT. HE WAS PART OF GROMYKO'S PERSONAL STAFF IN MOSCOW AND IS APPARENTLY FALIN'S CLOSEST POLITICAL ADVISER IN BONN. HIS REMARKS THEREFORE HAVE A CERTAIN VALUE AND SEEM TO US FAIRLY CREDIBLE. IN SHORT, THE SOVIETS IN BONN ARE UNHAPPY OVER THE SITUATION THAT HAS DEVELOPED, ONE FOR WHICH THEY KNOW (IN THE BONN EMBASSY AT LEAST) THAT THE USSR BEARS A CERTAIN RESPONSIBILITY.

10. THE PLANS FOR CHANCELLOR BRANDT'S JULY VISIT TO MOSCOW ARE OBVIOUSLY NOW OUT OF THE QUESTION. THE SOVIETS ARE CONSIDERING EXTENDING AN INVITATION TO SCHMIDT BUT DO NOT EXPECT HIM TO TAKE IT UP BEFORE 1975.

HILLENBRAND

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Message Attributes

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